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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Sato et al.
Application No. 08/750,641
Filed: December 16, 1996
Attorney Docket No. 77792/23

DECISION ON PETITION

This is a decision on the renewed petition under the unintentional provisions of 37 CFR 1.137(b), filed December 10, 2008 and again on March 10, 2009, to revive the above-identified application.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

Any request for reconsideration of this decision must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b)." This is **not** a final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 704.

The application became abandoned for failure to timely pay the issue fee on or before July 17, 2000, as required by the Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due, mailed April 17, 2000, which set a statutory period of reply of three (3) months. Accordingly, the application became abandoned on July 18, 2000. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed September 13, 2000.

A grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by: (1) the required reply, unless previously filed; (2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(m); (3) a statement that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required by 37 CFR 1.137(d). Where there is a question as to whether either the abandonment or the delay in filing a petition under 37 CFR 1.137 was unintentional, the Director may require additional information. See MPEP 711.03(c)(II)(C) and (D). The instant petition lacks items (1) and (3).

There are three periods to be considered during the evaluation of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b):

- (1) the delay in reply that originally resulted in the abandonment;

(2) the delay in filing an initial petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) to revive the application; and

(3) the delay in filing a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) to revive the application.

The delay has still not been shown to the satisfaction of the Director to be unintentional for period (2).

As to Period (2):

Where the applicant deliberately chooses not to seek or persist in seeking the revival of an abandoned application, or where the applicant deliberately chooses to delay seeking the revival of an abandoned application, the resulting delay in seeking revival of the abandoned application cannot be considered as "unintentional" within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.137(b). *See* MPEP 711.03(c).

The language of both 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) and 37 CFR 1.137(b) are clear and unambiguous, and, furthermore, without qualification. That is, the delay in filing the reply during prosecution, as well as in filing the petition seeking revival, must have been, without qualification, "unintentional" for the reply to now be accepted on petition. The Office requires that the entire delay be at least unintentional as a prerequisite to revival of an abandoned application to prevent abuse and injury to the public. *See* H.R. Rep. No. 542, 97th Cong., 2d Sess. 7 (1982), reprinted in 1982 U.S.C.C.A.N. 771 ("[i]n order to prevent abuse and injury to the public the Commissioner . . . could require applicants to act promptly after becoming aware of the abandonment"). The December 1997 change to 37 CFR 1.137 did not create any new right to overcome an intentional delay in seeking revival, or in renewing an attempt at seeking revival, of an abandoned application. *See* Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice, 62 Fed. Reg. 53131, 53160 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 63, 87 (October 21, 1997), which clearly stated that any protracted delay (here, over eight years) could trigger, as here, a request for additional information. As the courts have since made clear, a protracted delay in seeking revival, as here, requires a petitioner's detailed explanation seeking to excuse the delay as opposed to USPTO acceptance of a general allegation of unintentional delay. *See* Lawman Armor v. Simon, 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 10843, 74 USPQ2d 1633, at 1637-8 (DC EMich 2005); Field Hybrids, LLC v. Toyota Motor Corp., 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1159 (D. Minn Jan. 27, 2005) at *21-*23. Statements are required from any and all persons then at the practice at Kenyon & Kenyon and the responsible person(s) having firsthand knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the protracted delay, after the abandonment date, in seeking revival.

As noted in MPEP 711.03(c)(II), subsection D, in instances in which such petition was not filed within 1 year of the date of abandonment of the application, applicants should include:

- (A) the date that the applicant first became aware of the abandonment of the application; and
- (B) a showing as to how the delay in discovering the abandoned status of the application occurred despite the exercise of due care or diligence on the part of the applicant.

In either instance, applicant's failure to carry the burden of proof to establish that the "entire" delay was "unavoidable" or "unintentional" may lead to the denial of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b), regardless of the circumstances that originally resulted in the abandonment of the application. *See also* New York University v. Autodesk, 2007 U.S. DIST LEXIS, U.S. District LEXIS 50832, *10 -*12 (S.D.N.Y. 2007)(protracted delay in seeking revival undercuts assertion of unintentional delay).

While the renewed petition thoroughly discussed time period (1), i.e. the delay in reply that originally resulted in the abandonment, as listed above, more information is required; specifically, the timeframe from 2004 to 2008. Petitioner is required to explain in detail the delay from the filing of the Information Disclosure Statement on September 10, 2004 until the filing of the petition on August 6, 2008.

Additionally, it is not apparent whether the person signing the instant petition was ever given a power of attorney or authorization of agent to prosecute this patent. In accordance with 37 CFR 1.34(a), the signature appearing on the petition shall constitute a representation to the United States Patent and Trademark Office that he/she is authorized to represent the particular party in whose behalf he/she acts. Any renewed petition may be addressed as follows:

By Mail: Mail Stop PETITION
 Commissioner for Patents
 P. O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By hand: U. S. Patent and Trademark Office
 Customer Service Window, Mail Stop Petitions
 Randolph Building
 401 Dulany Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314

The centralized facsimile number is **(571) 273-8300**.

Correspondence regarding this decision may also be filed through the electronic filing system of the USPTO.

To expedite consideration, petitioner may wish to contact the undersigned regarding the filing of the renewed petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to Joan Olszewski at (571) 272-7751.

/Liana Walsh/
Liana Walsh
Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions